

County Rotary, Jersey Shore Council Boy Scouts of America, Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Council of Ocean County, Barnegat Historical Society, and both Barnegat Fire Company Number One and the New Jersey State Fireman's Association is a demonstration of his commitment to the people of Ocean County.

I have always valued his friendship and support through the years. I hope Dean and his wife, Christine, will accept my congratulations and best wishes for a retirement filled with health, happiness, and dreams come true.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1588,
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 7, 2003

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I have mixed emotions as I consider the fiscal year 2004 defense authorization conference report.

I would like to thank my chairman, Mr. HUNTER, and Ranking Member SKELTON for working with me on several items that will benefit the people in my district, Travis Air Force Base, and our military airlift capabilities overall.

Indeed, the language in the bill expediting the transfer of land from the Navy to the Housing Authority of the City of Dixon will improve the living and work conditions of migrant workers who contribute to the local economy.

The language preventing the Secretary of the Air Force from retiring C-5A aircraft until one has been modernized and tested is a crucial measure that not only sustains a critical investment in upgrading one of the United States' most reliable transport planes, but it also ensures that Travis Air Force Base will continue to be an important provider of strategic lift in the near future.

The bill also contains a number of important provisions for our men and women in uniform such as an increase in base pay; a reduction in housing expenses; an increase in family separation allowance; and an increase in the rate of special pay for our brave troops who serve in hostile situations and imminent danger.

Despite these important positive elements, the bill contains several reckless provisions that undermine the security of the United States and needlessly jeopardize civilian employees and the environment.

This bill puts the United States back in the business of making nuclear weapons, adds unnecessary regulations that hamstring the DOD's nonproliferation programs, takes away the protections of civilian personnel, and gratuitously endangers the environment.

By lifting the ban on research and development of low yield nuclear weapons, Congress is abetting the administration's efforts to build a new generation of nuclear weapons; is inviting an arms race with rogue states, terrorists and allies; and is making a nuclear conflict more likely in the long run by undoing decades of American leadership in controlling the spread of the most deadly weapons known to man.

The Defense Bill, rather than increasing the budget for the DOD's valuable cooperative

threat reduction programs that dismantle and destroy weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union, adds unnecessary funding restrictions that in the end will only hurt the security of the American people.

The broad environmental exemptions provided for in the bill will undermine efforts to protect our environment by, among other things, making it harder to wall-off parts of military facilities as protected areas for wildlife.

Proponents use spin to claim this is necessary for military readiness, but it's hard to see how a blanket environmental exemption for everything on military installations from golf courses to swimming pools are pressing matters of national defense.

Moreover, the Pentagon can already get waivers from the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act when national security is at stake. But in the three decades since these laws have been in effect, not a single waiver has been sought.

The bill also abolishes DOD's long-standing labor relations system and replaces it with one in which civilian employees have only minimal consultation with unions and Congress.

The bill allows DOD to remove basic due process rights that employees currently enjoy by waiving their right to a written response, their right to be represented by an attorney, and their right to a written decision explaining the action.

I am deeply disturbed that the Republican Party has hijacked an important bill for our troops and attached to it a radical slash-and-burn ideology that is sure to undermine civilian morale at the Pentagon, needlessly endanger the environment and most alarmingly, endanger the American people with an irresponsible nuclear agenda.

I am voting for this bill because I do not believe, especially in a time of war, we should punish our active troops by withholding funds and measures that would benefit them because of some of the administration's imprudent and over-reaching provisions in the bill.

HONORING SPC. JAMES "JIMMY"
ANDERSON CHANCE, III

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2003

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening before the House to pay tribute to Specialist James "Jimmy" Chance of Kokomo, Mississippi. Specialist Chance was a member of the Mississippi Army National Guard serving in C Company of the 890th Battalion attached to the Army's 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment in Iraq.

Tragically, Specialist Chance was killed on Thursday, November 6, 2003, when his vehicle struck a landmine near the Syrian border. He was the first of our own Mississippi National Guardsmen to lose his life while bravely serving in the Iraq War.

Specialist Chance is a true American hero who has paid the ultimate price to protect our country from terrorists and defend the liberties of the citizens of the United States of America. Furthermore, he has unselfishly given his life to win freedom for the people of Iraq who suffered under the unbearable rule of an evil dictator. These are people he did not know, but

yet, he has helped give millions of Iraqi men, women, and children, the chance to live lives of freedom and independence like we know at home in the United States.

Even though I know his family is enduring great suffering as a result of their loss, I hope they will find peace in knowing that Specialist Chance bravely served his country and his countrymen and defended the values and principles that Americans hold so dear. Specialist Chance was a defender of peace and a lion of liberty.

Specialist James Anderson Chance, III, represents the best of Mississippi and our Nation. I ask my colleagues in Congress to join me in honoring his courageous service, and ask that you pray that his family will find peace during this trying time.

A TRIBUTE TO THE WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SOCIETY
OF MOSUL

HON. DEBORAH PRYCE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2003

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, as the leader of the first all women's United States Congressional Delegation to Iraq, it is my pleasure on behalf of Representatives JENNIFER DUNN, SUE KELLY, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, MARSHA BLACKBURN, KATHERINE HARRIS, DARLENE HOOLEY and CAROLYN MCCARTHY, to commend the excellent work being done at the Women's Social and Cultural Society of Mosul. Today, with great honor and privilege, I would like to recognize the major milestones the organization has achieved.

The Women's Social and Cultural Society, comprised of more than 200 members, represents a variety of ethnic, religious and professional affiliations. These women are truly creating a new ideal within their country as they promote social, political and educational equality for all Iraqis. For too long, Iraqi women have suffered without equal or even adequate access to education, justice within the legal system, employment opportunities, and representation within the government. The members of the Women's Social and Cultural Society of Mosul must be applauded for their commitment to end decades of oppression against women by fighting to give them a voice and a respected role of leadership within their communities. The challenge is immense, but their determination is steadfast and unwavering.

We commend and praise the Women's Social and Cultural Society of Mosul today and urge our colleagues to wish them continued success as they pave the way for future generations of Iraqi citizens.

IN HONOR OF HILARY KITASEI

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 17, 2003

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, Riverdale is a fortunate community in that not only do the people who live here care for it, but newcomers after they arrive also do their best to make it even better.